

Minutes of October Meeting of Allentown EAC

A meeting of the Allentown EAC was held on October 13, 2014 starting at 5:15 p.m. in the 3rd floor conference room at City Hall.

EAC Members Present: Rich Niesenbaum, Carolyn Albright, Randy Fey and Tinku Khanwalkar

Non-EAC Members Present: Claudia Steckel, Scott Burnet

Old Business

- Rich Niesenbaum moved for approval of the September minutes, Carolyn seconded and the minutes were approved.
- There was a discussion of some changes to the draft By-laws as circulated by Tinku Khanwalkar to all EAC Members via e-mail on October 6, 2014. Following the discussion, Tinku Khanwalkar moved to approve the By-laws as modified, Carolyn Albright seconded and the By-laws were unanimously approved as modified.
- Tinku Khanwalkar reported on her conversation with the Mayor in which he requested the EAC to research potential green initiatives and recommend ones that have been successfully implemented by other similar cities. Each EAC Member agreed to develop a list of potential green initiatives for further discussion at the November meeting. Tinku Khanwalkar pointed out that the Green Ribbon Committee Report and Recommendations (previously circulated to EAC Members) may contain some useful information. Randy Fey pointed out that many of the initiatives covered in the Green Ribbon Committee Report relate to actions to be taken by the City Planning Commission. Tinku Khanwalkar clarified that the initiatives picked by the EAC should not intrude into the jurisdiction of the City Planning Commission and that we are expecting the Mayor to appoint Rich Niesenbaum to the City Planning Commission to provide EAC input there. The EAC should instead look into initiatives such as reducing bird strikes, plastic bags, styrofoam, carbon footprint, etc. The EAC will then select two or three initiatives to further research and to recommend at least one viable initiative each year to the Mayor.
- Tinku Khanwalkar reported that the Lehigh County Planning Commission has a great deal of environmental inventory data and the EAC could look at ways to make the information more readily available – such as through links on its Facebook page. Rich Niesenbaum agreed to look into this.

New Business:

- There was a discussion about commending the City for its decision to remove the land bridge to Sparkle Island. Carolyn Albright moved to send a letter to the Mayor on this with a copy to City Council. Rich Niesenbaum seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.
- There was a discussion about the fish kill that was observed on October 8th after the color run marathon event. In light of the prompt cooperation of the Parks Department with the investigation of the fish kill by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Tinku Khanwalkar moved that the commendation letter to the Mayor could include this subject as well. Rich Niesenbaum seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

- Tinku Khanwalkar mentioned the annual report that the EAC will need to file pursuant to Ordinance No. 14800. The report needs to include a summary of EAC's activities and accomplishments. As Rich Niesenbaum is the only current EAC Member who has been on the EAC since the beginning of 2014, he agreed to develop a draft report for review at the November meeting.
- Tinku Khanwalkar suggested that the December EAC meeting should focus on the 2015 goals for the EAC.
- Claudia Steckel and Scott Burnet raised a concern about the Allentown Shade Tree Commission requiring people to plant invasive species. Randy Fey explained that the Allentown Shade Tree Commission only tells people what they cannot plant but does not direct people to plant specific trees. Claudia agreed to look at the list of prohibited plants and provide input to Randy Fey.

The meeting was duly adjourned at 7:30 p.m.